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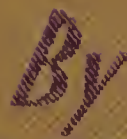
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CHILDREN *of* CHINA



GRACE KINER



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CHILDREN *of* CHINA



It would be quite impolite to forget to give a visitor tea, no matter when he comes

CHILDREN OF CHINA

By
GRACE KINER

Drawings by
RUTH KELLOGG



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THOMAS S. ROCKWELL COMPANY
CHICAGO
1931

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CHAPTER I

BABIES IN CATHAY

FIVE HUNDRED years ago a young man named Marco Polo lived with his father in Italy. They had their home in Venice, which is a city built out over the water in the north-eastern part of the country. The father of Marco was a trader, and when Marco was twenty years old, he and his father went to China to buy silks and jewels to sell in Venice. As far as anyone knows they were the first travelers to go to China.

They went to the palace of the Great Kahn, who was emperor of all China. He asked Marco to stay with him. So for several years the Italian boy stayed in China and traveled all over the country with the Great Khan. There is a story that the daughter of the Kahn fell in love with Marco and died of grief when he went back to Italy.

It was Marco Polo who called China by the pretty name that has been used by poets and story-tellers ever since. He called it Cathay.

When a little boy is born in China his father and mother are very happy. Baby girls are not so welcome. The Chinese people do not like girls. They do not think that girls are worth anything. The reason for this is that the Chinese people have a strange religion. They think that when a man dies he goes to a place much like China. There he meets all the people who have died before he did. His father and grandfather and all of his other relatives are there. This place is ruled over by a great many spirits. If these spirits think that the man is a rich and famous man on earth, they will be good to him and give him a fine house to live in. If his sons and grandsons on earth forget him, then the spirits in the next world will treat him badly and give him only a poor hut.

A man always wants to have many sons to bring gifts to his grave and burn incense before the piece of wood that has his name carved on it in his house. Sometimes when one man

meets another on the street instead of saying "Good morning," he says. "May you have a hundred sons." It is only boys who can bring gifts to the grave of their father and burn incense for him in the temples, so that is why girls are not wanted as much as boys are.

There are spirits all over the world, too. Some of them are good, but most of them are bad. The bad ones spend all their time trying to do harm to people. It takes a great deal of thought to fool them, and keep them from hurting the people on earth. The men think that their fathers in the next world can talk to these evil spirits and get them to do wicked deeds to the men on earth if the men on earth do not remember their dead ancestors. To keep that from happening the Chinese men visit the tombs of their ancestors often, take gifts to them, and burn incense sticks before the ancestral tablets on all the holidays.

It is these bad little spirits, or wicked devils, all about the earth that the Chinese think make all the sickness and all the accidents and everything else that is bad. If the rains do not



come when they want them, they say that the Rain God is angry. If the river gets so swollen with rain and melted snow that it overflows its bank, they say that the River Demon is cross with the people along the banks. Everything bad is blamed on such devils.

The little boy must have a name, and his parents pick some bad name to fool the spirits. They will call him something like Little Puppy, or Foolish Monkey, or, if he is the third son, Number Three. The Chinese words for Little Puppy are *Hsiao Gwoh*, which really means Small Doggie. Sometimes they even call him Little Girl, to trick the spirits into thinking that he is a girl. Girls are not worth anything, and the spirits never waste their time doing harm to them.

When Little Puppy is old enough to go to school, that is, when he is about seven years old, he is given his real name. His real name will be a lucky one, like Great Wealth or Long Life or Good Health. He writes his name backwards. That is, he puts his family name, which is our last name, first. Chao Kwang Yin



was the name of a famous Chinese emperor who lived a thousand years ago. Chao was his family name, as Smith or Brown is the family name of an American boy. Kwang and Yin were the emperor's own names. If a boy named Richard Henry Smith were to write his name like a Chinese boy does, he would write it Smith Richard Henry. In many families the little girls are loved and cared for just as much as are the boys. Girls are often given flower names, like Hwa Hoong, which means Red Flower. Others may be called Blue Blossom or Silver Needle or Green Leaf.

Little Puppy was dressed in thick clothes wrapped closely around him. He did not have a cradle, but slept on the bed with his mother. His father and his uncles shot off firecrackers to celebrate his birthday. The firecrackers did two things; they showed how joyful the family was because they had a new little son, and they were supposed to frighten the devils away from the baby. When little Red Flower was born, some firecrackers were fired off, but not so many, because she was a girl. They were



not so glad to have a girl, and they thought that the bad spirits would not bother much about a girl anyway.

A baby is said to be a year old when he is born in China. Little Puppy was born in the month of December. Then at New Year's he had a birthday and was two years old. In America his mother would have said that he was just one month old. Everyone in China has their birthday at the same time. Everyone gets a year older at New Year's. It is the birthday of the year and the birthday of everybody in China all at the same time. No matter when a Chinaman or a Chinawoman is born, he has his birthday on New Year's Day and is one year older. It is the big holiday of the year and lasts for two weeks, like Christmas and summer vacations rolled into one.

When Little Puppy and Red Flower are one month old they are christened and all their relatives come to a feast. The relatives must bring gifts of money and food and clothing to the baby. They are given a slice of roast pork to take home with them. The Chinese people



are so fond of roast pork that they have it at all their feasts. Just before his christening, Little Puppy had his head shaved all around except for a little space on top. The little bit left on top was saved to grow into a cue. Not many Chinamen wear cues now, but they still shave their heads. At the end of a hundred days the hair is thrown into a river or lake. That is supposed to bring the child long life. About the year 1300 an emperor forced the Chinese men to let their hair grow into cues as a sign that he had defeated them in battle. They have worn them ever since until the last few years. China has been a republic with a president since 1912. Since it has been a republic, most of the men have cut off their cues.

When the babies are a month old, they can be fed rice cakes and tea. When they are four months old, they can be given pigs' feet to eat. The Chinese think the pigs' feet help them learn to walk. In one year they can have rice. They are not given milk, because there are not many cows in China, and most Chinese people have never tasted milk, butter, or cheese.



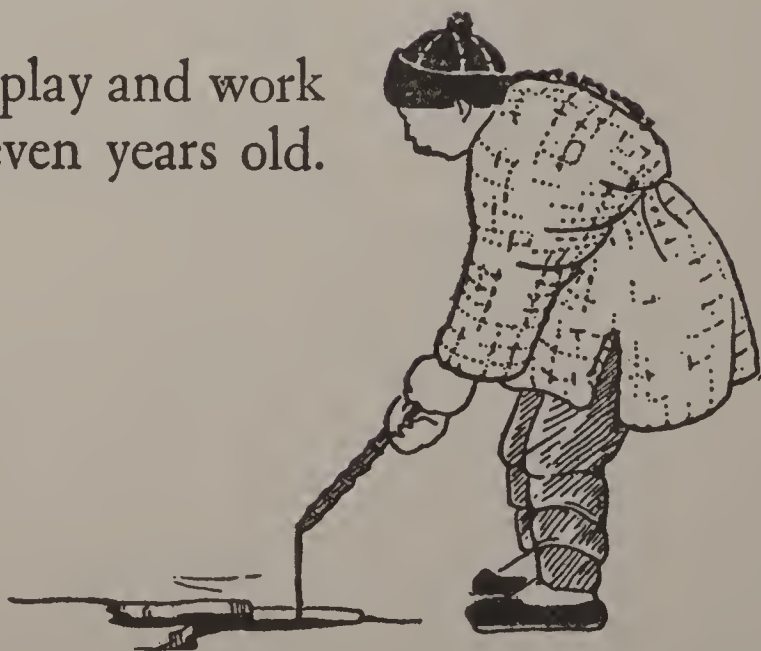
Chinese children are never noisy; they must obey their parents and never cause them any trouble. Little girls often have to do what their brothers want them to do, even if the brothers are younger than they are. They do not run and shout or answer back when they are spoken to. Sometimes a Chinese child is whipped for something that he did not do because he has been taught not to answer his father. An American child would think that it was very hard to be so quiet and solemn, but that is the way children have been taught to act in China for thousands of years.

The first duty of a Chinese child is to please his parents. Little Puppy and Red Flower are told many stories about children who did kind deeds for their parents. One of these stories is about a little boy whose mother was sick. She had been sick for a long time and had grown tired of the food that the servant cooked for her. The rice did not taste very good to her, and she was tired of the chicken and duck that was stewed for her. One day she said that she would like to have some fish to eat.

Her little son heard her. Early the next morning he went down to the river to see if he could get a fish for his mother. But it was in the middle of the winter and the river was all frozen over. The ice was so thick that he could not break it with his hatchet. Then he went back to the house and heard his mother say again that she wanted fish to eat. The good little boy took his hook and line and went back to the river again. He wrapped his woolen coat around him and laid down on the thick ice.

It was bitterly cold and he thought that he would freeze to death, but he stayed there all day until the ice under him began to melt because of the warmth of his body and the thick woolen coat. After a long time there was a hole melted in the ice big enough to fish through. The boy put down his line and caught a big fish. He ran home with it. The servant cooked it for his mother. She ate it and was soon well.

Little Puppy and Red Flower play and work together until they are about seven years old.



Then the boy goes off to school, and the girl has her feet bound. Both of them go to school in some parts of China now, and it is against the law to bind little girls' feet, but it is still done everywhere except near the coast. There are many English and American people living in the cities on the eastern coast of China, and the Chinese people are learning to dress and act as they do. But back in the other parts of the great country they do just as they did three thousand years ago.

There is a story which explains why the Chinese ladies bind their feet. About the year 300, Kang Hsi, a great emperor, had a wife with a twisted foot. She did not want anyone to see that her foot was crooked, so she wrapped it up in yellow silk. All of the ladies of the court wanted their feet to look like those of the empress. Therefore they all tied up their feet with cloth and tried to make them as small as they could. Then it came to be the fashion to have tiny feet. They call them golden lilies, because of the yellow silk cloth that the empress used to bind her crippled foot.

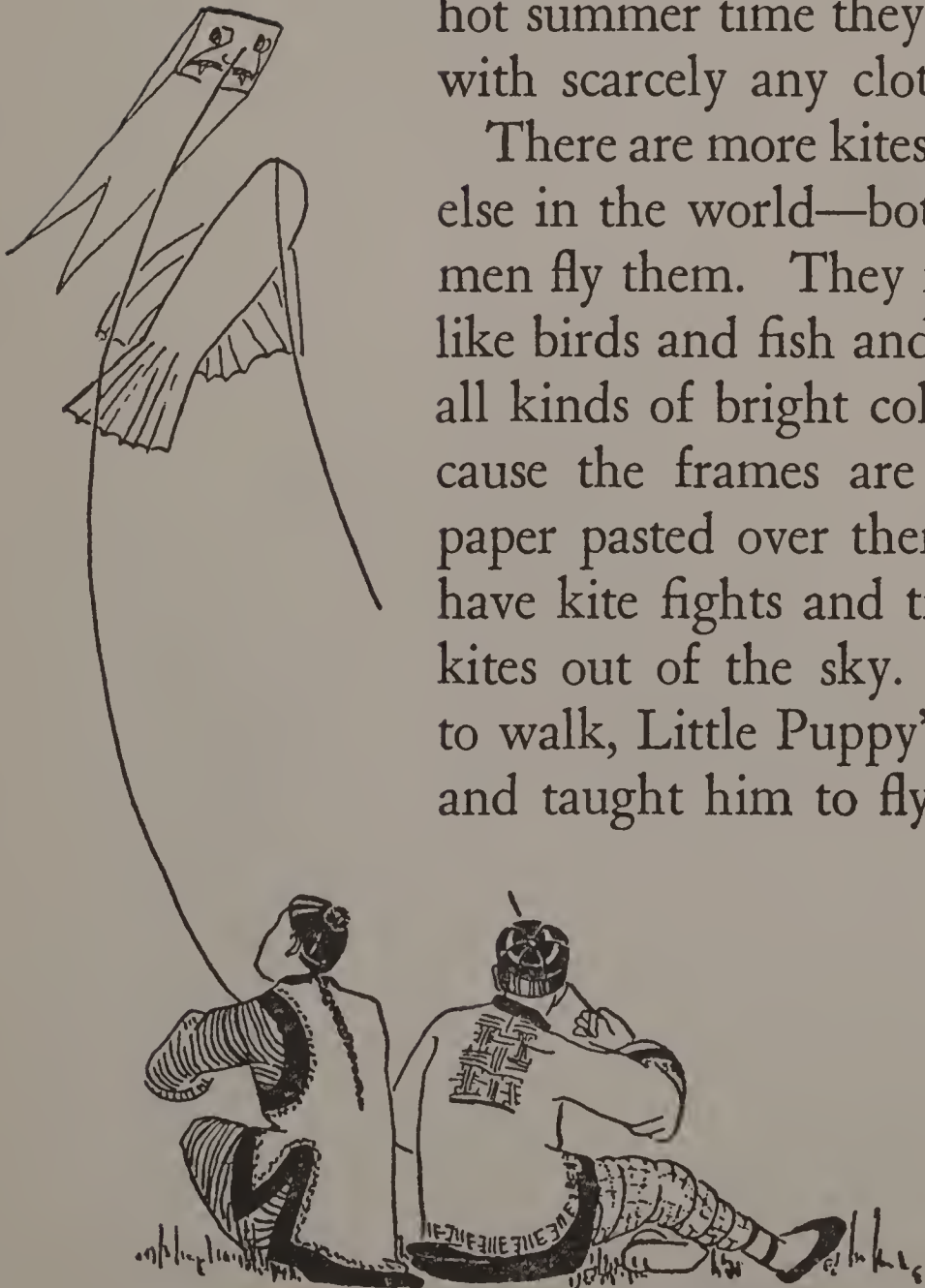
Only slave girls have big feet. The other girls have them tied up when they are young, so that there isn't much left of them but a heel and big toe. They are sometimes only three inches long. They are not much good to walk with, and Chinese women with bound feet can go only very short distances. They have to be carried in chairs, either fastened between mules, or carried by servants. They make fine silk shoes, covered with lovely embroidery for the useless little feet. No man of high rank will marry a girl with large feet. It is terribly painful to have feet bound. The Chinese have a saying: *For every pair of bound feet there is a bed full of tears.* They mean that it hurts so badly that the little girl cries for many nights. But she wants to have her feet bound, otherwise she would not be fashionable, and people might think she was a slave girl.

Red Flower and Little Puppy wear almost the same kind of clothes. They have loose trousers that are tied around their ankles and a short coat that comes to the knees. The little boy wears bright red and green and



purple clothes, often with a great deal of embroidery on them. Red Flower may have clothes of duller colors. She wears her hair puffed out around her face with fine silver ornaments in it. In the winter time they wear heavier garments. Not many Chinese houses have stoves for heating. Northern China has severe winter weather, but Chinese people put on heavier clothes instead of making a fire. They look very fat in the winter time because of the thick padded clothes they wear. In the hot summer time they may run about the yard with scarcely any clothing on at all.

There are more kites in China than anywhere else in the world—both little boys and grown men fly them. They make lovely ones shaped like birds and fish and flowers and paint them all kinds of bright colors. They are light because the frames are of bamboo sticks with paper pasted over them. Sometimes the boys have kite fights and try to knock each others' kites out of the sky. As soon as he learned to walk, Little Puppy's father gave him a kite and taught him to fly it.



CHAPTER II

DRAGONS EVERYWHERE

EVERYWHERE in China there are dragons. Not real live dragons, but images of them carved on the walls and on the roofs of temples. Pictures of them are painted on the walls of houses and on silk banners. The women embroider dragons on silks to use for coats or for wall hangings. Artists paint them in pictures. Before the days of the republic a black dragon was on the flag of China. The little demons in the air try to do harm to the people of China, but the dragons are thought to be friends of everyone.

Nobody ever saw a real dragon, of course, but they believe in them just the same. A long time ago, when China was first settled, the first Chinese found the bones of great beasts in the earth. These beasts were animals thirty and forty feet long that lived on earth before

men came to live here. They lived in the swamps and ate the tall grass and ferns. They lived and died before men came to the earth, but their bones remained in the swamps for a long time. They are called dinosaurs.

The first Chinese found these great bones and thought that they belonged to dragons that lived in China before men came. The first emperors took the dragons for their own special animal. The dragon that the emperors had was painted with five toes and a head like a camel. Common people could have dragons with only four toes carved or painted on their walls. All dragons have whiskers under their chins, and their bodies are long and coiled up like a snake.

The dragons are supposed to cause storms. A dragon is curled up in a cave at the bottom of the sea. He makes the water rough when he is angry. The rain dragon is especially long and snake-like. In his pictures he is always coiled up among clouds with his head showing and with two horns like a goat.

Chinese painters do not care if the pictures



The dragon is always coiled up among the clouds with his head showing and with two horns like a goat

that they paint do not look real. They want to show the soul or spirit of the animal or man that they are painting. If they make a drawing of a fish, they want to get the soul of the fish in the drawing, not just what the fish looks like on the outside. There is a good story about an artist who painted a picture of a dragon on the wall of a house. He was a good artist, and the picture was like the real spirit of the rain dragon. Then one day a thunder storm came up. There was a loud clap of thunder and the dragon got off the wall and disappeared into the rain clouds. The artist had been too good, for he had to go to work and make another picture on the wall.

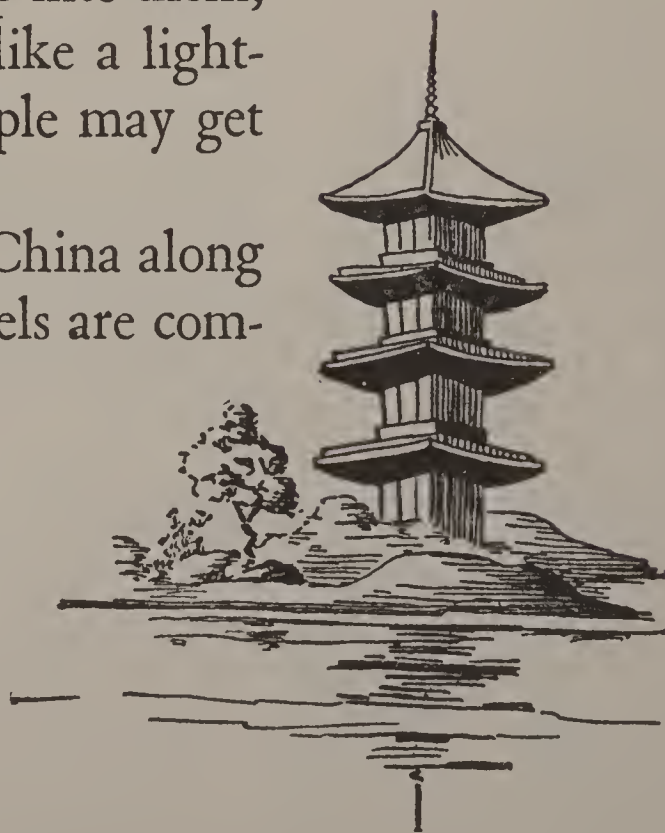
Dragons are so popular in China that they are painted on dishes and on fans and on the covers of books. One of the holidays is a dragon festival. On that day dragons hundreds of feet long, made out of paper, are carried through the streets. Dragon-boats are launched on the rivers, and races are held. The people think that the dragons will help in times of sickness. Every drug shop keeps a supply of

ground-up dragon bones to use for medicine. Ground dragon bones are supposed to give anyone who takes them much strength. If a boy is afraid of anything, his parents get some for him to take so that he will be brave.

Before a city is built in China, the priests go out and try to find the dragon that is buried in the earth. They think that a city must be built where there is a dragon. When they have found the dragon's tail, the people get to work and build a pagoda on top of the dragon's tail to hold it down, so that the dragon can never leave the city. Every town has a pagoda; a big city may have a dozen or more of them. Each one is holding down a dragon's tail.

Pagodas are little towers of several stories. Some of them have nine or ten little balconies around the tower. Many of the towers do not have stairways and no one can go up into them, but others have circular stairways like a lighthouse. From the top of these people may get a view of the city.

There are many real animals in China along with the imaginary dragons. Camels are com-



mon. People do not ride on them very much, as they do down in Africa, but they are used to carry goods. In the north and west of the country very little rain falls. The land is cold and like a desert in many places. Here there are no railroads, and food and clothing and all kinds of freight is shipped on the backs of camels. They are tied together in long caravans with ropes that run through their noses; sometimes a hundred camels are fastened in a row.

When Little Puppy and his mother went to visit his grandmother they did not go on a train or in an automobile. The roads were not good enough for automobiles. Instead, they rode in a sort of covered chair set up on two poles. A donkey was hitched between the poles in front and behind. On the road they met a great many wheelbarrows. The Chinese wheelbarrows are not made like those in America. They have one big wheel in the middle with shelves on each side of it. A donkey pulls the barrow in front. If the donkey is not strong enough, sometimes a man is hitched up with him. The wheelbarrows carry

all sorts of things. Little Puppy saw one with great bales of cotton fastened to either side, going down to the cotton mill. On another a woman and little girl were riding on one side and a pig was tied on to the other shelf. The little girl's father was helping pull the load.

They went past a great many men carrying poles on their shoulders and with boxes or bags tied to the ends of the poles. Most of the freight of China is carried by men on poles over their shoulders. In some of the towns the women of the lowest class, who do not have bound feet, carry goods this way.

Little Puppy saw some carts with two great wooden wheels being dragged along by mules or buffaloes. They made a great squeaking and whining, because nobody in China ever puts grease on their cart wheels. When the road went along by the river, the little boy saw hundreds of boats with brown sails made out of woven mats.

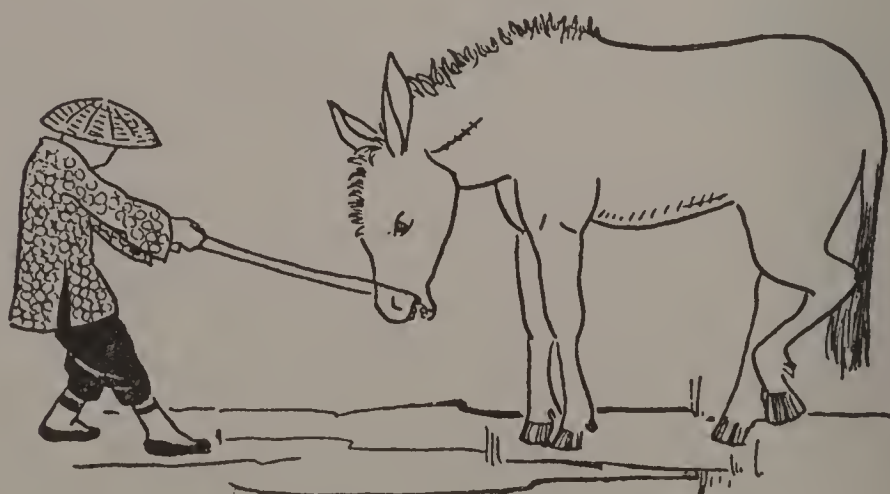
At home Little Puppy and Red Flower have many dogs. One kind of little dog is called the Pekingese, or sleeve dog. They are so small



that they can be carried in their master's sleeve. If the master gets a bit of food that he does not like, he gives it to the little dog in his sleeve and no one notices it.

The father of Red Flower and Little Puppy had a pet bird. He kept it chained by one foot to a little perch made of two sticks. Often when he went out to walk in the evening he took his bird along. Some of the birds sing and some of them are kept for their pretty colors.

There are very few horses and cows in Little Puppy's country. Instead of horses, the people use mules and donkeys to ride and drive. The farmers use great water buffaloes with wide-spreading horns to do the work in the rice fields. The buffaloes look very fierce, but they are really so gentle that Red Flower could lead one of them out to pasture by a string run through his nose.



CHAPTER III

BIRD NEST SOUP AND SHARKS' FINS

AT ALL the feasts at Little Puppy's house they had bird nest soup. It is one of the queerest of all the Chinese foods. The bird that makes the nest is called the swiftlet. It looks very much like a little swallow and makes its nest in caves by the sea. The nests are about the size of a goose's egg and are white or pink. They do not have sticks and feathers mixed with them, but are built out of a sort of gum that the bird makes in its mouth. Men climb up the sides of the sea caves to get the nests.

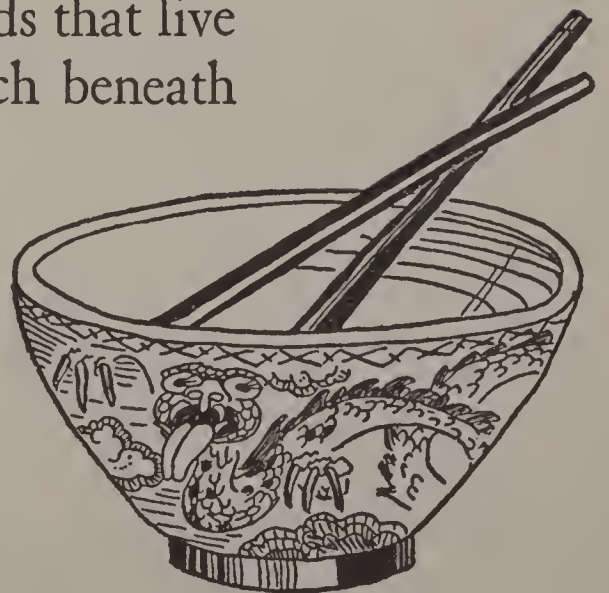
The nests are dried before they are sold in the stores. When they are put into water or thin soup and boiled for a long time, they make it thick and gummy, like a clear slippery mush. It doesn't have very much taste, but Little Puppy and his family think it is delicious. It is the first course at every grand dinner party.

Chinese food is always cut up fine and made into stews or broths. That is because they do not use forks and knives when they eat. They use two sticks about ten inches long and about as thick as a pencil. These are called chopsticks. The chopsticks are made of bamboo or bone, or, if the family is rich, they may be made of ivory, carved with fine figures. At the table in front of each person is a bowl full of rice. Little Puppy and his brothers must ask their father's permission before then can sit down at the table. They hold their chopsticks between their first fingers and reach for pieces of meat from the dishes of stew in the center of the table. These pieces they lay on top of the rice in the bowl. When they have enough meat they lift the bowl up against the lower lip and use the sticks to push the rice into their mouths. If there is soup it is dished into their bowls with little ladles. If Little Puppy gets his fingers dirty while he is eating, a servant comes with a wet towel so that he may clean them.

Everyone eats rice in China. The stoves are made with a hollow for cooking rice built into

the top. There, rice is cooking all day long. When the pot is empty, it is scraped out and at once more rice is put on to cook. When one man meets another on the street he does not always say, "How do you do"; he may say, "Have you eaten rice?" The Chinese words for that are *Chih-fahn*. When the rice crop fails, hundreds of people starve to death. Babies are given rice to eat when they are only a few months old. Rice is pounded up into flour, and the flour is used to make cakes of all kinds. At every feast there are rice-flour cakes made in the shape of a turtle, for the turtle is the sign of long life.

Everyone in China is fond of fish. They eat a great deal of it. Fish takes the place of the meat that they are often too poor to buy. When Little Puppy was going to visit his grandmother he passed along a river. Out on the river was a man fishing with cormorants. He had a little boat with perches for the great black birds built out along the sides. Ten cormorants were sitting on the perches. They are birds that live on fish. Each one has a large pouch beneath



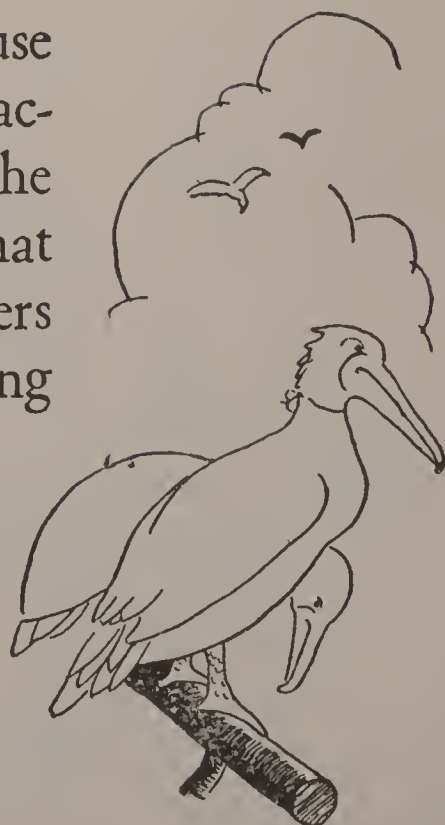
his beak where he stores the fish that he catches until he can come to the top of the water and swallow them.

To keep his birds from swallowing the fish that they caught, the fisherman had tied a string around each one's neck just below the pouch. When he gave a signal the big birds dived off the boat into the water. They can swim under water for a long time without coming up for breath, and they can go so fast that they can catch almost any kind of fish. When they had their pouches full they came back to the boat. They are trained to come back to the boat when he whistles, whether they have filled their pouches or not. Then they have to give him the fish in their pouches. At night he takes the string off their necks and feeds them the little fish that he does not want to sell. He throws the fish to the birds and they catch them. Then he ties the birds to the perches with a cord around one leg.

Farther up the river Little Puppy saw a man with a duck raft. It was a broad raft with a little fence around it. On the raft were about

two hundred ducks. The owner of the raft was pushing it along with a pole. When he came to a marshy place on the edge of the river he pushed the raft to the bank and fastened it to a tree. Then he opened a little gate and all the ducks rushed out into the swampy place and began to hunt for grubs and worms. They poked their broad yellow bills into the mud and quacked happily when they found food. At night their owner called them and they all came running to the raft. They hurried because they knew that the last one would get a hard slap with a stick. During the night the raft would float down the river to another swamp where there were grubs and worms to hunt for. By the time the ducks were ready to sell, the owner would try to be near a city where there was a good market for ducks.

Red Flower had often seen her mother use dried eggs to cook with. There are great factories in many Chinese cities that dry eggs. The eggs are brought to the factory in baskets that hold a bushel or more. Boats on the rivers leading to the town collect the eggs and bring



them to the factory. There, girls break them and separate the yolks from the whites. A girl can break and separate about five thousand eggs in a day. Then the egg mixture is dried and packed into tins for shipping. The yellow powder made by drying the yolks is used by bakers and confectioners. The dried whites are used in place of fresh eggs in cooking and making medicines. There is a factory in Shanghai that can dry more than a million eggs in one day.

At banquets the children had eaten pickled eggs. Sometimes they were a year old. Everyone thought that they were a very fine food. The eggs are covered with a paste made of salt and ashes and soda and put in a jar for thirty days or more. Sometimes they are buried in the ground. When they are old enough they are taken out and the shells taken off. They are stiff by this time and taste very different from fresh eggs. Some kinds become black.

Nobody in China ever drinks cold water. It is always made into tea, and served after meals in cups without handles. No one puts sugar

or cream or lemon in their tea. They would think that the flavor was completely spoiled if they put anything in it. They like the green tea best. They do not use saucers, either. The English people got the idea of using saucers from someone who made little plates to set on top of the cup to keep the tea from getting cold. Then someone thought of putting the little plate under the cup so that it would be easier to carry, and that is how we came to use saucers. The English began to use tea about the year 1700. At first they called it tay, and the word is still pronounced like that in Scotland and Ireland. The English people did not like to hold the little cups full of hot tea in their hands. So they invented a handle to put on the side of the cup. But nobody in China ever has a handle on his cup, nor does he have a saucer.

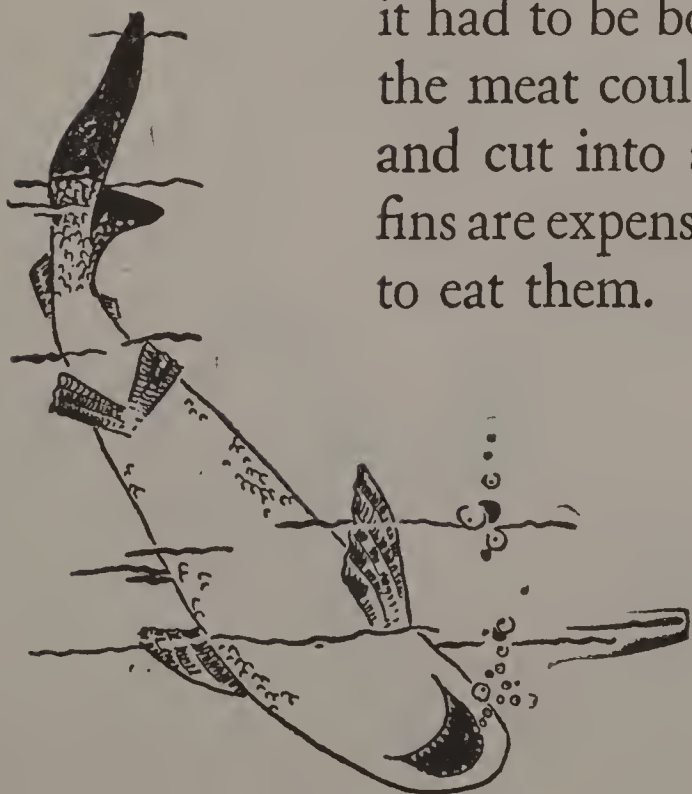
Early in her life Red Flower was taught to offer hot tea to anyone who came to call. It would be quite impolite to forget to give a visitor tea, no matter when he came. They make a noise when they drink their tea that is to show that they are enjoying it. The people



at the table make a noise when they eat, too, to show that they like the food. To eat quietly in China is to be ill-mannered.

Two meals a day are usually enough. One comes in the morning about ten o'clock; the other at night about five. There may be a luncheon in the middle of the day of tea and little cakes, but no big meal then.

Sharks' fins are bought dried, unless the family lives very near the seashore. The shark is a great fish that is so fierce that sometimes it kills men who fall into the water. The fins are made of large spikes of bone covered with a thin layer of flesh and skin. It took Red Flower and her mother a long time to prepare them for eating. First the dry piece of fin had to be soaked for a long time. Then it had to be boiled in water with wood ashes; then the skin had to be scraped off. After that it had to be boiled in several other waters until the meat could be taken away from the bones and cut into small pieces for eating. Sharks' fins are expensive; so only rich people can afford to eat them.



CHAPTER IV

FARMS UNDER WATER

IT WAS spring when Little Puppy and his mother went to visit his grandmother, so that he saw the farmers all along the way planting their rice. The donkeys that carried the chair in which he and his mother were riding could go only about four miles in an hour, which gave him plenty of time to see people working the farms along the way.

Since everyone in China eats rice at every meal there must be a great deal of it raised. It is a hard crop to grow, too, harder than wheat or oats or corn. Early in the spring the farmers sow the rice in special seed beds that are very wet, for rice is a wet weather plant and must have a great deal of water all its life in order to grow. The grains sprout in a few days and are allowed to grow in the seed beds until they are six or eight inches tall. That takes about

a month. Before the farmer starts to plant his field he floods it with water for several days. Then the sprouts are transplanted to the field while it is under water. The little rice plants are taken from the seed bed and planted in rows in the mud of the field. Both men and women work for many days in water up to their knees before the fields are all planted.

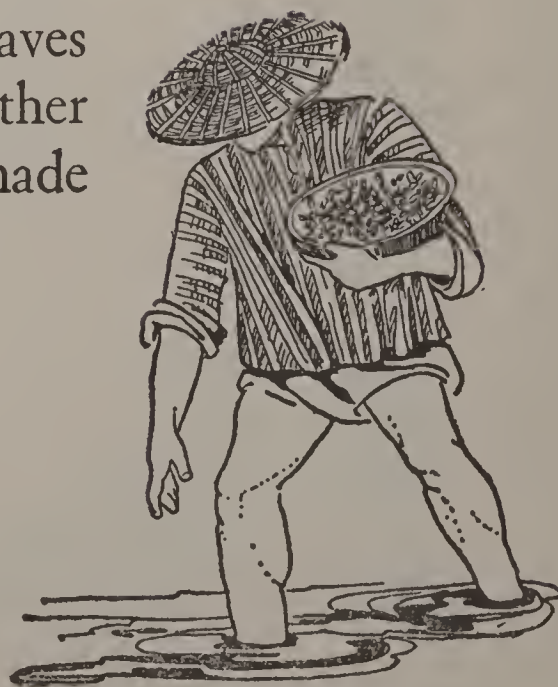
The fields must be kept under water most of the summer or the rice will not grow. The farmers wade in the water up and down the rows pulling out the weeds. The rice looks much like oats or wheat growing. When it is ripe in September it is a bright golden color.

Rice is sometimes too expensive for the poorest people, even in China, where so much of it is grown. The people who cannot afford rice eat millet and other grains cooked up into a kind of mush. The names for meals in China all have the word rice in them. Breakfast is called *chiu-fan*, or morning rice. *Ye-fan*, which means late rice, and *man-fan*, or evening rice, are the names for dinner. If a person is sick his friends will say, "He cannot eat his rice."

There are so many people in China that they do not let a single bit of land go to waste. The men carry earth from the river banks up on to the rocky sides of the mountains and make little fields there like wide shelves. Those fields are called terraced fields. If the terraced fields are on the south slope of the mountains, tea bushes will probably be planted on them.

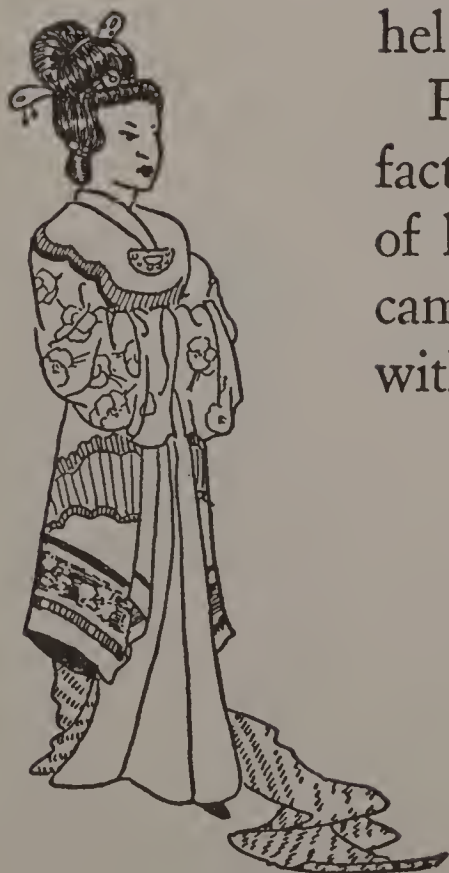
The tea bushes are planted in rows about three feet apart. The plants grow three or four or five feet tall and have leaves much like rose leaves all over the branches. The tea bushes are evergreens, therefore they do not lose their leaves in the winter. The leaves are a sort of smoky gray-green and the flowers are like wild roses with thick waxy petals. Some of the blossoms are white and some are pink and they smell very sweetly when the field is in bloom.

When he went to school Little Puppy learned that his country made about one-third of all the silk in the world. On his journey he saw many groves of mulberry trees whose leaves were used to feed the silkworms. His mother told him the story of how silk came to be made



in China. About five thousand years ago in Hang-Chow-Foo, which means the City of Heaven, the southern capital of China, lived the Empress Si-Ling-shi. One day, as she was walking in her garden, she saw a caterpillar making a cocoon on a mulberry tree. She was interested in seeing how cunningly the insect wrapped the thread around himself and fastened his little cradle to the branch. She liked the bright shining thread of which he made the cocoon. She took the cocoon into the house and soaked it in water until she could unwind the thread. That was the first silk thread in the world. It is called *si* in China after her. In France they changed the name to *soie*, in England it is called silk. Si-Ling-shi is called the Goddess of the Silkworms, and every year when the mulberry leaves first open a feast is held in her honor.

For two thousand years the Chinese manufactured and sold silk, but they kept the secret of how it was made. Kings of other nations came to conquer parts of China and took away with them bales of fine silk, but they did not

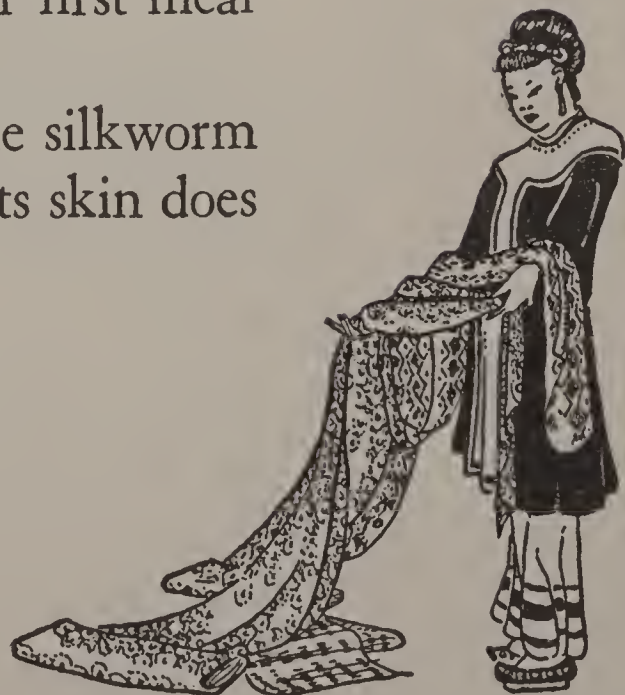


find out how to make it themselves. It was not until about three hundred years after the birth of Christ that the secret was discovered. Some Japanese soldiers captured four Chinese maidens from a silk-making village. After a time the girls came to love the men who had carried them away from their homes and told them how the silk was made. Then the Japanese men made another war on the silk-weaving village and carried off a tray of the silkworms to Japan. Since that time silk has been made in Japan, for the mulberry trees that the worms feed upon grow in Japan as well as in China.

The silk moth is a little white insect about two inches across the wings. The mother moth lays about five hundred pale tan eggs, each one about the size of the head of a pin.

In a few days the little worms hatch. They are at first just tiny black hair-like creatures. They are hungry and soon get their first meal of chopped up mulberry leaves.

It takes thirty-two days before the silkworm is full-grown. As it grows bigger its skin does



not grow, so that every four or five days it has to shed one skin and get a bigger one. The full-grown worm is about two inches long, about as big around as a man's little finger, and pale yellow in color. Then it is ready for the work of making silk. The girls know when the worm is full-grown and take him out of the tray and put him on a frame made of bamboo sticks.

Here he begins to spin. He makes a very fine silk thread in his body, which he then spins from his mouth. This thread he throws around and around his body until he is all wrapped in a blanket made of tiny silk threads. It takes him two or three days to make this house for himself. As soon as he has finished, the girls take the cocoon and place it near a charcoal fire, close enough so that the worm inside is killed by the heat. They put the cocoon into warm water to loosen the silk threads, which are then unwound. There is sometimes as much as twelve hundred yards of thread in one cocoon. This thread is so very fine that it takes several strands of it



Chinese girls are skilled workers in the silk industry

together to make ordinary silk thread such as is sold on spools. The silk that is unwound from the cocoons is called raw silk and is sold to factories. There it is dyed and spun into cloth. Some of the cloth is woven in China, but much of the raw silk is sold to England and the United States.

When Little Puppy had almost reached his grandmother's house, he saw groves of bamboo trees. They were seventy and eighty feet tall with feathery tops. He had eaten the sprouts of the bamboo at home, but he had never seen the trees before. He knew that the wood was used to make rooms and walls of some houses, and at his own home they had baskets and chairs made out of it. His little umbrella had a handle and ribs of split bamboo. His mother told him that the trunks of the larger trees were used for water pipes because they were hollow.



CHAPTER V

BEDS MADE OF BRICKS

LITTLE PUPPY found that his grandmother's house was large and made of wood. It was not like houses in America, because it was made up of several smaller houses all set around an open yard. There were no windows in the outside walls of the house, but there were windows opening into the courtyard. Only one door opened into the street. Little Puppy was taken to his grandmother in the woman's part of the house. His mother was very happy to be in her old home again, although she was no longer considered her mother's daughter. When a girl is married in China, people think that she is not the daughter of her mother any more; she is thought to be the daughter of her husband's mother.

That night the visitors slept on a bed built of bricks along the wall of the room. They

had plenty of padded cotton comforters to put under and over them, but the night was cold and Little Puppy's grandmother sent a servant to make a fire under the bed to warm it. The servant put a little fire of charcoal in the hollow space under the bed, and that kept them warm until morning. In the poorer families they would have burned a little bunch of straw under the bricks to warm the bed.

Before he went home Little Puppy went to see his grandfather's coffin. It was a gift to his grandfather from one of his uncles. They do not wait to get the coffin in China until someone is dead, but one of the sons buys it for his father or for his mother as a birthday present. Then they keep it in the house until it is needed. The coffin that was for the grandfather was finely made. It was built of a heavy dark wood and was beautifully carved.

Going home they followed a different road and saw the Great Wall of China. The Great Wall was built hundreds of years ago to keep out the Tartars, a very fierce race of warriors who were coming from the north to drive the

Chinese out of their homes. It begins at the China Sea and goes across the northern part of the province of China proper and stops at the great desert of Gobi in the north. It is more than fifteen hundred miles long. It goes over mountains and through river valleys. Towers were built every little way so that warriors could look far out over the enemies' country. All along the top on the outside is a high, narrow fence with openings every few feet for the archers to shoot through.

As they crossed a bridge, Little Puppy leaned out of the chair and saw great hooks fastened under the bridge. He asked his mother what they were for. She told him that there were great floods in the river every spring when the snow up in the mountains melted. The water came so far up the banks that many of the people who lived along the edge were drowned. The people thought that the floods were caused by the flood demon and put the hooks there to try and catch him as he came down the river.

Two great rivers, the Yangtze and the Hwang, or Yellow River, run through China



and down into the China Sea and the Yellow Sea. All along these rivers Little Puppy saw houseboats with families living in them. They all were little low boats with great brown sails of matting to catch the wind. If they are going up the river, men and donkeys pull them along with a rope. The family lives under an arched roof made of mats and do their cooking over a little stove up in the front of the boat. Most of the people who live on the boats are fishers. The children of the houseboats always have little barrels tied to their backs, so that if they fall off the boat in their play they will not sink before they are rescued. Every boat has eyes painted on each side of its prow. That is so the boat can see where it is going. They think that the boat would be wrecked surely if it did not have eyes. Even the little boats that go out to meet the big ships in the harbor have eyes painted on the sides.



CHAPTER VI

LITTLE PUPPY GOES TO SCHOOL

LITTLE PUPPY should not be called Little Puppy any more after he goes to school, because then he gets his real name; but since we do not know his real name, we will go on calling him that. The schools of China have changed a great deal in the last few years. Before the country became a republic in 1912 the boys went to a school where they did nothing but memorize several books. They did not know what they were memorizing, but they learned them anyway. All the pupils studied aloud. If one of them stopped shouting, the teacher thought that he had stopped studying and punished him. When a boy thought that he had learned his lesson for the day, he took his book up to the teacher and turned his back and then repeated what he had learned.

In the old days only educated men could be

officials in the government. Examinations were held every summer in the chief cities in the empire. In some towns there were great halls with tiny booths just big enough for one person and a shelf to write on, and enough booths for ten thousand students. The boys taking the examinations stayed in these little cells for three days and three nights writing all the time. Guards were outside the doors to see that no one helped them and their food was passed in through a little hole in the door. Sometimes the boys died in their cells from the heat and strain.

All that is over now. The educated men are still wanted for government officials, but they do not have such terrible examinations to go through. There are government public schools, too, much like those in the United States, and both boys and girls can go to them. They teach history and geography and arithmetic and writing. Writing in China is a hard task because they do not have an alphabet. Every word has a separate symbol like a little picture. To learn to read a child has to learn thousands of different word-signs. Learning to

write is like learning to draw or paint. Writing is done with a little brush and black ink.

Arithmetic is hard to learn in China, too. The money is different from the money in other countries. The smallest coin is called a *cash*. It is worth one-twentieth of an American cent. It takes so many *cash* to buy anything that the Chinese carry them threaded on strings. Each of the *cash* has a square hole in the center so that it can be strung on a string. It takes one thousand *cash* to make a *tael*, which is a silver coin worth fifty cents in American money. They have copper pennies, too, bigger than our cents, and dimes of silver that are worth five cents in American money. One queer kind of money is the silver shoes. Those are pieces of silver weighing about a pound made in the shape of a tiny shoe. There is much paper money as well, but the Chinese do not like to trade with paper money very much.

Little Puppy learns in history that China is one of the oldest countries in the world. Its history goes back for six thousand years. He has seen the temple in Peking where, thousands



of years ago, the emperor used to go on the twenty-first of December to pray to his ancestors, and where every spring he used to plow a furrow with a gold-handled plow and sow a handful of rice. No farmer in those days put in his crops until the emperor had started the plowing and sowing.

The history of China is mostly about a long list of great families who ruled over the country until they were driven out by another great family. One of the first emperors was made ruler because he drained the land so that the farmers could raise crops. It is told that he had a bell hung on his gate so that if anyone was in trouble he could ring it and the emperor would come out and help him.

Each little village in China is ruled over by a mandarin. He is an important person who wears yellow robes. Only the emperors or important officials could wear yellow robes in the old days. When the mandarin went out on the street, he sent men to run ahead and tell the people to get down on their knees and bow their heads before him. They do not



do that any more, but the mandarin is still the most powerful person in the town. His wife is called the Tai-Tai, or Wife of the Mandarin. She is a powerful person also.

Little Puppy went to school every day, for they do not have week-ends in China. Now there are schools that Red Flower can go to, also, and great universities are built in some of the large cities. There the students are taught much as they are in other countries. Little Puppy learned many of the wise sayings of the great scholar Confucius, who lived hundreds of years ago. Here are some of them:

*Within the four seas all men are brothers.
Heaven will not keep a king who is un-
kind to his people.*

He who rides a tiger cannot dismount.

*When brothers quarrel, then strangers will
cheat them.*

*The object of learning is the increase of
knowledge.*

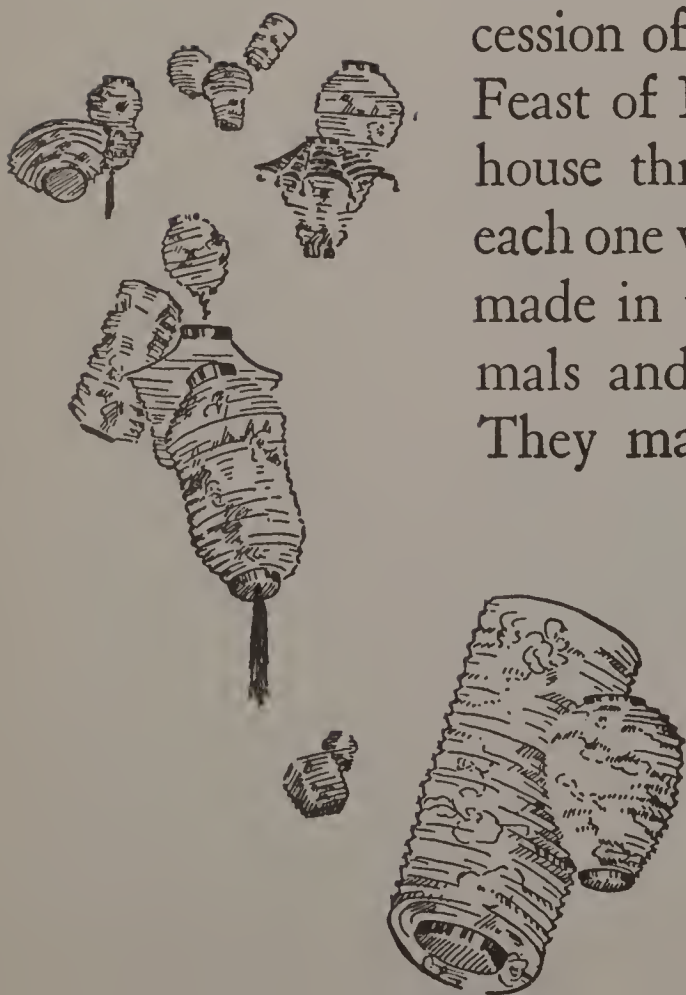


CHAPTER VII

THE FEAST OF LANTERNS

CHINESE lanterns made of rounds of bamboo covered with paper are used to light most of the houses and shops in China. In just a few of the coast cities are they beginning to use electric lights. The lanterns are painted with flowers and landscapes and figures of men and women. Often they are real works of art. The Chinese carry them at night because there are no street lights in most of the towns.

One night in May Little Puppy and Red Flower were allowed to stay up to see the Procession of the Lanterns. It was the day of the Feast of Lanterns. In the street outside their house three hundred men or more gathered, each one with a fine lantern. The lanterns were made in the shapes of fish and birds and animals and they all had their candles lighted. They marched past the house swinging the



lanterns and with bands of music playing. The smell of sweet incense came to the children. Last of all came a terrible dragon made of paper and about forty feet long. It took twenty men to carry it along on bamboo poles. Sometimes the lantern procession is held in the daytime, but it is not so long nor so pretty then.

All along the road were beggars. They have a sort of beggars' union in China with a king to whom they must give part of the money they get begging. The beggars go out in boats to meet the ships. They take tiny babies that cry, so that the people on the ship will feel sorry for them and give them money. All along the streets of the cities are beggars in rags and suffering with many horrible diseases. Sometimes poor people sell children to the king of the beggars and he teaches them to beg.

Although they know it was a sad time for someone, the children always liked to see a funeral procession. When a man dies in China, his sons go to the priest at the temple to find out when will be a lucky day to bury him. Sometimes the lucky day will be several weeks off.

While they are waiting, they put the dead man in his black-painted coffin that perhaps has been in the house for years, and all of the family sleep near it so that he will not be lonesome. They spend the time getting ready for the funeral.

When the day finally comes for the funeral, men are hired to walk in the funeral procession and mourn for the dead man. They think that the men who make a business of mourning at funerals can do a better job than the real mourners. When the coffin is put into the grave, paper money and other things are burned and food is left on the grave. They think that the soul of the dead man is going to Tien, or Heaven, but it is several days journey there and he must have food put on his grave every day for a time, so that he will have it for his trip.

The holiday that Little Puppy and Red Flower liked best of all was the festival of the New Year. It lasted for two weeks and was like a vacation and a birthday party and a feast day all the while it lasted. The year has a birthday then. They think that the new year

is born on that day. Everyone in China gets a year older then, too. Everyone gets new clothes to wear for New Year's. Red Flower made some new shoes all embroidered in red and green. Few people wear leather shoes in China. They are made of silk with soles of felt. There are not different shoes for the right and left feet either; both shoes are just alike. In the winter the shoes are set up on little pieces of wood, like stilts, to keep the feet out of the snow. The poorest people have shoes made out of rice straw, and their coats and hats may be made out of it, too.

The week before New Year's day Little Puppy's father went to see the storekeepers and paid all of his debts. Everyone pays all their debts before New Year's. It is thought to be bad luck to have a debt go past that day. If a man cannot pay all of his debts, he pays part of them and perhaps the man he owes them to will say that he does not need to pay the rest. Everyone lays in a great store of firecrackers and fireworks of all kinds for New Year's, just as American families do for the Fourth of July. When



they fire them off they think that it scares the unlucky demons out of their wits, so that they do not come back for a year. Red Flower's father got some signs made of paper. These he put up over the door of the house. They asked the good spirits to come in and told the bad spirits to stay away. One of the signs told the bad spirits that everyone in the house had been good all year.

During the two weeks that the New Year's celebration goes on, the stores and factories close, and everyone has a holiday. They put on new clothes of red and black, for they are the holiday colors, and people go to call on their friends. They give gifts at New Year's in China, as we do at Christmas time.

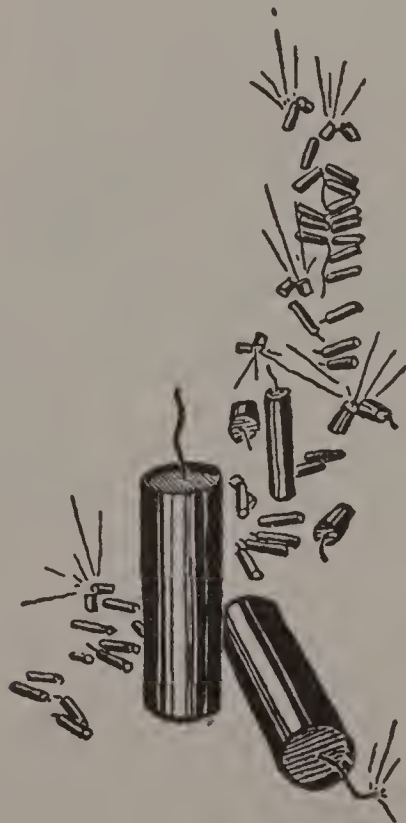
Everyone in China is fond of fans. They have all kinds of them; some of them are beautifully painted and are made of ivory and silk; others are of paper with bamboo sticks. All the men carry them in the streets, and women use them to keep away the flies and to keep themselves cool. They are often given as presents at New Year's. The Chinese people



*At New Year's everyone has a holiday and wears
new clothes of red and black*

are very fond of flowers and often give them as gifts at the holiday time.

They celebrate other holidays, too. Almost every village has its own special god or idol whose birthday is celebrated in that village and nowhere else. The time of the full moon is celebrated in a great many places, and the men who work in factories get a half-holiday. The women have some holidays that the men do not have. All their lives Little Puppy and Red Flower had seen processions go past the house and had heard the noise of firecrackers popping to celebrate some holiday. They did not miss not having Sunday or Christmas or the Fourth of July or Thanksgiving.



CHAPTER VIII

THE RED BRIDAL CHAIR

WHEN Red Flower was fifteen years old, her father thought that it was time for her to be married. There are no "old maids" or bachelors in China. Everyone gets married. Red Flower's father had a friend who had a son about twenty years old and he thought that this young man would make a good husband for Red Flower. He did not ask her about it. He did not think that she had anything to do with it. Girls in China are never asked about whom they want to marry. Their fathers and mothers make all the plans and then tell them whom they are to marry.

Red Flower's father did not go to see his friend about the marriage. That would not have been good manners. He sent for a woman who made her living making matches for other people. First they asked the priest if it would

be a lucky marriage. He said that it would. Then the matchmaker went to the father of the young man and asked if they would like to have their son marry Red Flower. They said that they would and sent presents to the girl's family. These gifts were sent in little wooden boxes and money was put in one of them. That is why some people say that men buy their brides in China.

One of the presents that the boy's parents sent to Red Flower's father and mother was a pair of geese. They were white geese, but their feathers had been dyed red, because red is the color for weddings. A great many of the presents were red. The geese were supposed to show that the boy and girl were going to live together all their lives like the geese did.

Red Flower did not see her husband before they were married. It would have been thought bad manners for her to see him. The wedding was to take place at the home of the groom and not at the home of the bride. That is the way it always is done in China.

The man she was to marry sent a red chair

with red curtains all around it for Red Flower to ride in to his house. The servants who were to carry it were dressed in red, too. He sent her the red dress and veil that she was to wear when she came to his house to marry him. Before she put on the red dress and veil, Red Flower, for the last time, sat down to a feast with her mother and sisters. There would be a feast at her husband's home when she got there, but she could not eat it. She was expected to wait on her new mother-in-law there. After the feast was done her mother helped her put on the red dress and veil, and Red Flower cried and cried to think that she was leaving her home forever. If she had not felt badly she was expected to cry anyway. Every Chinese bride must cry when she leaves her father's house.

As she went out the door of her home, Red Flower threw back over her shoulder a pair of chopsticks to show that she would eat her father's rice no longer. Then she was lifted into the red chair and the curtains were closed tightly around her so that no bad spirits could get in to harm her. Her father had hired bands



to make music along the road. One band played behind her and one in front. They beat their drums and made a great amount of noise to show how important Red Flower's family was. They went very slowly through the narrow streets, so that they did not stumble with the bridal chair. That would have brought bad luck to Red Flower. She could hear the cries of the jinrikisha coolies.

The jinrikishas are like chairs swung between two wheels. The wheels have rubber tires on them to make the jinrikishas ride easily. A man pulls the little carriage by getting between the shafts in front. Everyone in the Chinese cities travels in them. Red Flower remembered her mother's telling her that the jinrikishas were invented about thirty years ago by a missionary who had an invalid wife. He wanted her to get out in the sunshine, so he made a jinrikisha and had his servant pull it.

It seemed a very long time to Red Flower before the servants carrying her red chair stopped in front of the house that was to be her home for the rest of her life. She was



lifted out and carried into the hall of her husband's house. He met her in the hall but did not lift the veil that covered her face. Together they went into the room where his ancestral tablets were. There they knelt down and touched the floor with their foreheads. Then her husband burned some incense sticks before the tablets and they went to the kitchen where they knelt before the kitchen god that hung over the stove, so that he would give them plenty of food as long as they were married.

Then they went back to a room in the woman's part of the house and sat at a little table and ate rice and drank wine together. It was only then that her husband lifted her red veil and saw what his new bride looked like. The rest of the day was spent in feasting and displaying fireworks. At the feast Red Flower had to serve her new mother-in-law and she tried to do it as well as she could because from now on she had to obey her mother-in-law in everything. If she did not do everything just as she was told, her mother-in-law could whip her.

When a girl in China is married, her own mother is thought to be no longer hers; her only mother now is her mother-in-law. Her only family is her husband's family, and his ancestors are hers. If she pleases her mother-in-law she will have a happy time, but if she does not she may be very sad. If her husband is the oldest son it may not be so bad, but if he is a younger son, then she has to obey not only her mother-in-law but the wives of her husband's brothers as well. There may be in one house in China a great many different families. A father and mother and their sons and their sons' wives and any daughters that have not married and the little children of their married sons. Sometimes there are more than a hundred members of the family and servants and slaves in one Chinese home. The mother-in-law is the head of the house, and everyone of the younger women and all the men except her husband must obey her.



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